

Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

OMB-01 IO-13 RSR-01 AID-20 /116 W

----- 033693

R 080914Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 214

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PK, AF

SUBJ: FRONTIER REACTIONS TO THE AFGHAN COUP

REF: ISLAMABAD 6295 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE, PATHAN POPULATION HAS REACTED TO DAUD COUP ALONG PREDICTABLE LINES: THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH BHUTTO REGIME TEND VIEW COUP WITH CONCERN AND DISAPPROVAL; THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY PRIVATELY EXPRESS BELIEF THAT PUKHTOONISTAN ISSUE CAN NOW BE EXPLOITED AGAINST BHUTTO GOVERNMENT; TRIBALS REPUTED TO SEE COUP AS OFFERING PROSPECT FOR LARGER FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES FROM KABUL AND ISLAMABAD. WIDELY BELIEVED SOVIETS INVOLVED IN COUP. END SUMMARY.

1. PUBLIC OPINION IN PESHAWAR HAS DIVIDED ALONG FAIRLY PREDICTABLE LINES IN ITS REACTION TO THE RECENT COUP
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IN AFGHANISTAN. MOST OF THOSE CONTACTED BY THE CON-

SULATE WHO ARE NOT AFFILIATED WITH OR SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS EITHER THE NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY OR THE JAMIATUL-ULEMA-I ISLAM OPPOSITION GROUPS VIEW DAUD'S RETURN TO POWER WITH VARYING DEGREES OF DISAPPROVAL, SUSPICION AND CONCERN. THEY TEND TO BE OF THE OPINION THAT DAUD, WITH LIKELY ASSISTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND INDIA, WILL ATTEMPT TO REACTIVATE THE PUKHTOONISTAN ISSUE IN AN EFFORT TO WEAKEN PAKISTAN AND POSSIBLE EVEN TO BRING ABOUT ITS FURTHER DISMEMBERMENT.

2. WHILE FEW OBSERVERS OF THE AFGHAN SCENE IN PESHAWAR WOULD CLAIM TO HAVE ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIET UNION ACTIVELY ASSISTED DAUD IN HIS RETURN TO POWER, MANY PERSONS HERE ACCEPT IT AS ALMOST AN ARTICLE OF FAITH THAT THE SOVIETS HAD A SIGNIFICANT ROLE TO PLAY IN THE COUP. THERE IS ALSO A COMMONLY HELD BELIEF, PARTICULARLY PRONOUNCED IN MILITARY CIRCLES, THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE AS MUCH OF A VESTED INTEREST IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF PUKHTOONISTAN AS DO THE AFGHANS. ONE SENIOR MILITARY OFFICER CONFIDENTLY PREDICTED TO THE CONSULATE THAT THE SOVIETS WILL NOW PROCEED TO UTILIZE THE ISSUE IN A RENEWED QUEST TO GAIN A FOOTHOLD ON THE ARABIAN SEA.

3. ANOTHER GROUP OF OPINION MAKERS, COMPOSED LARGELY OF NAP LEADERS AND SUPPORTERS, AND PRESUMABLY MANY OF THOSE AFFILIATED WITH THE JUI, HAVE REACTED SOMEWHAT DIFFERENTLY TO THE DEVELOPMENTS IN KABUL. WHILE THEIR PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE COUP HAVE TENDED TO BE NON-COMMITTAL AND CAUTIOUS, NAP LEADERS IN THEIR PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS HAVE INDICATED THEY ARE NOT UNHAPPY TO SEE DAUD BACK IN POWER. INDEED THE IMPRESSION HAS BEEN GAINED THAT WALI KAHN AND HIS ASSOCIATES BELIEVE THAT A REVIVAL OF THE PUKHTOONISTAN QUESTION WILL REDOUND TO THE BENEFIT OF THE NAP IN ITS STRUGGLE WITH PRESIDENT BHUTTO. MANY OBSERVERS HERE, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE PARTY, MAINTAIN THAT MEMBERS OF ALL FACTIONS WITHIN THE NAP, MODERATES AND MILITANTS ALIKE, SEE THE PUKHTOONISTAN ISSUE AS A WEAPON WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR USE AGAINST BHUTTO IF THE PRESIDENT CONTIUNES TO REFUSE TO MAKE CONCESSIONS TO THE NAP ON THE WHOLE RANGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF ISSUES WHICH PRESENTLY DIVIDE THEM. ACCORDING TO THESE OBSERVERS, HOWEVER, THE LARGE MODERATE FACTION AND THE SMALLER MILITANT GROUP WITHIN THE NAP HAVE DIFFERING VIEWS AS TO HOW THE PUKHTOONISTAN WEAPON SHOULD BE USED BY THE PARTY. WHILE THE FORMER SEE IT MERELY AS A STICK WHICH CAN BE USED TO TRY TO OBTAIN CONCESSIONS FROM PRESIDENT BHUTTO, THE LATTER REPORTEDLY ARE AWAITING THE DAY WHEN IT CAN BE USED AS A HEAVY CLUB TO INVITE

GOVERNMENT REPRESSION AND FORCE A FINAL SHOWDOWN WITH
THE PRESIDENT.

4. IN THE PERIOD SINCE THE AFGHAN COUP, VERY LITTLE
HAS BEEN HEARD IN PESHAWAR ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE IN THE TRIBAL
AREAS OF THE NWFP THINK ABOUT THE RETURN OF DAUD TO
POWER. HOWEVER, ALL THOSE OFFICIALS AND OTHERS WHO
CLAIM TO KNOW SOMETHING OF TRIBAL ATTITUDES ARE UNANIMOUS
IN CONTENDING THAT THE TRIBALS ARE DELIGHTED WITH THE
PROSPECT OF DAUD AGAIN PUSHING THE CUASE OF PUKHTOONISTA
BECAUSE THEY ARE CONFIDENT IT WILL LEAD TO AN
INCREASE IN THE FLOW OF MONEY TO THE TRIBAL AGENCIES
FROM KABUL AND ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES FROM
ISLAMABAD.
EVERTS

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